

## CLAIMS

### THE INVENTION CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for maintaining at least one response by an administrator in a system for autonomously processing requests, comprising the steps of:

providing a template to the administrator, wherein the template includes at least one field to elicit information from the administrator,

receiving information from the administrator into the template, and

making the information accessible to a rules-based program for use in providing the at least one response in reply to a request from a user.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information as part of the template, as structured data, and/or into rules.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the step of saving the information into rules includes the steps of:

retrieving rules,

for each rule retrieved, determining whether the rule needs information,

if the rule needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the rule.

4. The method according to claim 3, wherein the step of determining whether the rule needs information includes the steps of:

determining whether an input recognizer needs information,

if the input recognizer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the input recognizer.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the step of determining whether the rule needs information includes the steps of:

determining whether a response layer needs information, and

if the response layer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the response layer.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein the step of determining whether the rule needs information includes the steps of:

determining whether a logic layer needs information, and

if the logic layer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the logic layer.

7. The method according to claim 4, wherein the step of determining whether the input recognizer needs information, includes the step of identifying a signifier.

8. The method according to claim 5, wherein the signifier is a tag in a text string.

9. The method according to claim 5, wherein the signifier is an instruction embedded in a text string.

10. The method according to claim 5, wherein the signifier is a code.

11. The method according to claim 3, wherein the step of determining whether the rule needs information includes the steps of:

determining whether a response layer needs information, and

if the response layer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the response layer.

12. The method according to claim 11, wherein the step of determining whether the response layer needs information, includes the step of identifying a signifier in the response layer.

13. The method according to claim 12, wherein the signifier is a tag in a text string.

14. The method according to claim 12, wherein the signifier is an instruction embedded in a text string.

15. The method according to claim 12, wherein the signifier is a code.

16. The method according to claim 3, wherein the step of determining whether the rule needs information includes the steps of:

determining whether a logic layer needs information, and

if the logic layer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the logic layer.

17. The method according to claim 16, wherein the step of determining whether the logic layer needs information, includes the step of identifying a signifier in the logic layer.

18. The method according to claim 17, wherein the signifier is a tag in a text string.

19. The method according to claim 17, wherein the signifier is an instruction embedded in a text string.

20. The method according to claim 17, wherein the signifier is a code.

21. The method according to claim 3, wherein the step of retrieving rules retrieves all of the rules.

22. The method according to claim 3, wherein the step of retrieving rules retrieves all of the rules in a template information script.

23. The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program is accomplished by receiving a manual command from a user.

24. The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program is accomplished automatically upon the occurrence of a predefined event.

25. The method according to claim 24, wherein the predefined event is closing of the template.

26. The method according to claim 24, wherein the predefined event is passage of a predetermined amount of time.

27. The method according to claim 24, wherein the predefined event is activation of a save function by the administrator.

28. The method according to claim 1, further including the step of enabling the administrator to edit the information.

29. The method according to claim 28, wherein the step of enabling the administrator to edit the information includes the steps of:

retrieving the information,

posting the information in at least one appropriate field in the template,

receiving edited information from the administrator into the template, and

making the edited information accessible to the rules-based program for use in providing the at least one response in reply to a request from the user.

30. The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information as part of the template, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the step of restoring the information to the at least one field.

31. The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information as structured data, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the steps of, for at least one of the at least one field in the template:

retrieving instructions indicating where the information is stored, and  
executing the instructions to retrieve the information.

32. The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information into rules, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the steps of, for at least one of the at least one field in the template:

retrieving instructions indicating where the information is stored, and  
executing the instructions to retrieve the information.

33. The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information into rules, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the steps of, for each rule used:

determining whether the rule includes a signifier, and

if a signifier is included, executing instructions from the signifier to retrieve the information associated with the rule.

34. The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information into rules, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the steps of, for each rule used:

determining whether the rule includes a signifier, and

if a signifier is included, retrieving the information tagged in the rule.

35. A computer based system that processes inputs entered by a user and provides at least one response that is maintained by an administrator, comprising:

an interface configured to receive information from the administrator; and

an engine configured to make the information accessible to a rules-based program that provides the at least one response in reply to the inputs from the user.

36. The computer based system according to claim 35, wherein the interface is a template including at least one field.

37. The computer based system according to claim 36, wherein the information is saved in the template.

38. The computer based system according to claim 35, further including structured data, wherein the information is saved in the structured data.

39. The computer based system according to claim 35, further including a set of rules, wherein the information is saved in the set of rules.

40. The computer based system according to claim 35, further including an editor adapted to access the information and enable the administrator to edit the information.